

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated October 11, 2005, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-23 are rejected to by the Examiner. Claims 1, 6, 14, and 19 have been amended. Claims 1-23 remain pending in this application.

In the Office Action, claims 1-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Publication No. 2000-040828 to Hirabayashi et al. (hereinafter "Hirabayashi"). Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Publication No. 10-200120 to Shibuya et al. (hereinafter "Shibuya"). Claims 15-18 and 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hirabayashi and Shibuya in view of Japanese Publication No. 2002-006338 to Takagi (hereinafter "Takagi").

Claims 1, 6, 14, and 19 have been amended, therefore the rejection of claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph is now overcome. Further, the rejection of claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph is not clear, as the term predetermined is not used therein and Applicants fail to see any language in claims 23 that is very confusing. If there is specific language that the Examiner finds confusing, please identify this language, and Applicants will further address this rejection.

The rejection of claim 14 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claim 14 is allowable over the cited references in that this claim recites a combination of elements including, for example, "reducing the thickness of the crystallized polycrystalline silicon layer to a predetermined thickness." None of the cited references including Hirabayoshi or Shibuya teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

Hirabayashi is directed to polishing protrusions on a polysilicon layer formed by irradiating amorphous silicon. (See Abstract.) The Examiner equates this polishing step to remove protrusions as reducing the thickness of the polysilicon layer. While polishing the polysilicon layer in Hirabayashi does in that area reduce the thickness of the polysilicon, it does not reduce the thickness of the whole layer to a predetermined thickness. The polishing just

removes the protrusions leaving the polysilicon film with an indeterminate thickness. Further, in paragraph 0015 of Hirabayashi it states that if excessive pressure is used to polish the polysilicon film that it can crack and its thickness can be reduced, and this is undesirable. So Hirabayashi teaches away from reducing the thickness of the polysilicon film and also clearly differentiates between polishing to remove protrusions and reducing the thickness of the film as different processes. Shibuya is directed to the same process as Hirabayashi and has the same issues, hence the above arguments with respect to Hirabayashi apply to Shibuya. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is allowable over the cited references.

Further, rejected claims 15-18 and 20-22 depend from claim 14, so they are allowable over Hirabayashi and Shibuya as well. Takagi fails to cure the deficiencies of Hirabayashi and Shibuya, so claims 15-18 and 20-22 are also allowable over the cited references.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.


If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. *A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.*

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: January 5, 2006

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